Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A portable electronic device comprising:

a user interface;

a light sensor configured to determine ambient lighting conditions about the user interface and generate an ambient lighting signal based on the ambient lighting conditions;

a lighting circuit including a light source to illuminate the user interface; and

a control circuit coupled to the lighting circuit, the control circuit having a delayed operation mode wherein:

a first activation of the user interface clears or ignores a user entry so that it is not acknowledged by the user interface, illuminates the user interface, and activates a timer, the lighting circuit illuminating the user interface for variable time periods depending on the ambient lighting signal; and

a second activation of the user interface performs an operation of the device, acknowledged by the user interface, in response to determining that the timer is still activated.

2. and 3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) The portable electronic device of claim 1 ~~3~~, wherein the delayed operation mode is effective when the control circuit determines that the ambient lighting signal is below a minimum illumination level.

5. (Currently Amended) The portable electronic device of claim 1 ~~3~~, wherein the lighting circuit illuminates the user interface for a particular duration when the ambient lighting signal is at a low level and the lighting circuit illuminates the user interface for a shorter duration when the ambient lighting signal is greater than the low level.

6. through 10. (Canceled)

11. (Previously Presented) The portable electronic device of claim 1, wherein the control circuit receives a reverse bias signal generated by the lighting circuit when incident with ambient lighting about the user interface and activating the lighting circuit to illuminate the user interface based on the ambient lighting.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Previously Presented) The portable electronic device of claim 11, wherein the delayed operation mode is effective when the control circuit determines that the ambient lighting is below a minimum illumination level.

14. (Original) The portable electronic device of claim 11, wherein the lighting circuit illuminates the user interface for a particular duration when the ambient lighting is at a low level and the lighting circuit illuminates the user interface for a shorter duration when the ambient lighting is greater than the low level.

15. (Original) The portable electronic device of claim 11, wherein:

the lighting circuit illuminates the user interface for a minimum duration when the ambient lighting is at or above a maximum threshold level;

the lighting circuit illuminates the user interface for a maximum duration when the ambient lighting is below a minimum threshold level; and

the lighting circuit illuminates the user interface for an intermediate duration when the ambient lighting is below the maximum threshold level and at or above the minimum threshold level.

16. (Currently Amended) A method of illuminating a user interface of a portable electronic device, the method comprising the steps of:

determining ambient lighting conditions about the user interface;

generating an ambient lighting signal based on the ambient lighting conditions; and

detecting a first activation of the user interface;

clearing or ignoring a user entry so that it is not acknowledged by the user interface, illuminating the user interface for variable time periods depending on the ambient lighting signal, and activating a timer in response to detecting the first activation;

detecting a second activation of the user interface;

determining whether the time is still activated in response to detecting the second activation of the user interface; and

performing an operation of the device, acknowledged by the user interface, in response to determining that the timer is still activated.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein:

the step of detecting a first activation includes the step of detecting a first activation of the input device;

the step of illuminating includes the step of illuminating the display in response to detecting the first activation without performing any other operation of the device;

the step of detecting a second activation includes the step of detecting a second activation of the input device; and

the step of performing includes the step of performing an operation of the device other than illuminating the display.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16 further comprising, before the step of detecting the first activation, the step of determining that the ambient lighting conditions are below a minimum illumination level.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the step of illuminating includes the steps of illuminating the user interface for a particular duration when the ambient lighting conditions are at a low level and illuminating the user interface for a shorter duration when the ambient lighting conditions are greater than the low level.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the step of illuminating includes the steps of:

illuminating the user interface for a minimum duration when the ambient lighting conditions are at or above a maximum threshold level;

illuminating the user interface for a maximum duration when the ambient lighting conditions are below a minimum threshold level; and

illuminating the user interface for an intermediate duration when the ambient lighting conditions are below the maximum threshold level and at or above the minimum threshold level.